FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE WORKERS LOCAL 78-B
UNITED PACKINGHOUSE WORKERS OF AMERICA—(AFL-CIO)

HOTEL FRESNO, FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

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692 Brodway
El Centro, Calif. 92243
Feb. 17, '67

Dear Gene;

First, thanks for Huelga -- and for the inscription, which, pardon me, was a little exaggerated, we haven't done that much --; I was pleased and gratified to receive your book on Delano, which, I confess, I hadn't read... but now have, and which I'll take the liberty to comment on a little later, in another section of this letter.

I saw Charlie Brady this afternoon. He hadn't yet gone to the Post Office to see about his mail, but expected your statement to sign Viz a viz the possibility of Starr's bulking their cantaloupes, and said he would sign it and get it off to you. He said he had signed the authorization card and sent it to Mesa, apparently along with other mail home, with instructions to have it sent along to you, so hopefully you will have got it. His brother is Jr. Brady, also on the list, and presumably his authorization card is also in the mail, according to Charlie.

I couldn't find Fred Neece today, but he works at a cooler here, and is a sort of friend of mine -- but also a little bit of an Okie company man (you probably met him last Spring, he was boss at the ill-fated and short-lived La Casita Country cantaloupe job, and did give up his job, but only after some misgivings and threatening to fire a couple of his packers for not going to work) -- but I think I can get him to sign a card for you as a possible Starr honey-dew packer.

About Kelly and his sympathetic floor lady: my own feeling is to take your last advice Viz hope he will rehire her without our making a point of her being on your side. My guess is that Kelly is closer to Bill Birch than he is to us (meaning Jerry, you, and me).

Now, about the idea of your attorney informing Starr of which of our people have signed your cards: my impression is that Jerry told you on the phone that he would prefer that we didn't name names. Probably, at least for the moment, or until we talk to the individuals themselves, I would have to agree. As I understand it, the point would be that you might have a better chance of including the melon packers in the election if you could show that specific

workers were not rehired, say, because they had signed the cards; demonstrating that the company was deliberately discriminating against pro-union workers. Which might persuade the board to bring all melon workers into the election.

I agree. At the same time we don't feel that we have the right to put the finger on these men, inasmuch as they have no seniority and no protection, and at the same time are our best fruit-tramps, that is, they have signed your cards. What, I think, Jerry proposes, and it might be nearly as effective, is that your attorney informs the board, who informs the company, that you represent the melon workers, and that you expect them to be rehired -- at least as many as are needed (of course if they bulk and don't use packers, then we are up against another matter); and that all Calif.-Ariz people with seniority at Starr have authorized you as their bargaining agent, and that, as they say, to discriminate against one is to discriminate against all; that it might have the same effect. In other words, to leave the burden of proof on the company to show why they haven't rehired any or all of the pro-UFWOC workers.

Admittedly this may be hedging on our part. But we do have to get the individuals to agree to your proposal: which we'll try to do.* (* incidentially, you are not going to get cards from George Porter and Charlie Hastings. They have told people that they won't sign them. At the same time we have a chance this summer in Salome, Ariz, as I mentioned in an earlier letter, the put it on them, since they are working on a non-union melon job, which we can picket and force them to make the decision to scab or lose their job).

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About Huelga. Again, thanks for sending ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ it and for the inscription. As I mentioned in an earlier(I think My first) letter, we have followed the Delano strike since its inception, with great interest and admiration. Jerry took an active part in both DiGiorgio elections. Your evocation of how the strike turned into a movement is very illuminating and signifigant. I mean, from the inside. People began, eventually, to describe the Delano strike as a movement; and of course El Malcriado very early began to publicise it precisely as a movement. But what we learn from Huelga is how the experience and transcendence from within took over; how the "dialectic of revolutionary experience" (Lenin) itself recognized itself and created its own modes of self-expression and ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ invented its own ~~xxxxxx~~ tactics. The great insight in Huelga is precisely how a non-revolutionary class becomes revolutionary in the day-to-day struggle ~~xxxx~~ against -- as Marx said in The German Ideology -- alienation, non-being. This dynamic, this human enterprise, happens in your book.*

(a footnote: I had read a review of Huelga in The Movement. They didn't like it too much. Some of their criticisms were, I feel, valid. At the same time, they missed the point. They expected you to write another "History of The Russian Revolution" by Trotsky, which you weren't trying to do. They(the SNCC people) are, afterall, professional new-leftists, and are more concerned with doctrine than experience.

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(footnote, cont).

Precisely the success of the Delano strike was that it was run by neither SNCC nor AWOC (Al Green): but by Cesar. And I think this is the major virtue of Huelga to understand and to show this.

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* The other footnote from the preceeding pages was simply this: you are not getting mixed-up with a bunch of Stalinists. We (Jerry & I) are Leftists and Marxists but not Communists.

Later,

Keith

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important letter

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